

RE-ENGINEERING THE BUSINESS

Smith returned to California during a retail slump in the early 1990s to help the Elements team re-engineer their business. At the time, Hefter had developed their first “envelopment”—an unglued envelope made with heavy card stock to house cards and other products. Soon, they built a systemized product line of variously shaped paper enclosures created from a selection of elegant stocks using wide-ranging layers, folds, die-cuts and colors.

Jakobs recognized a wholesaling opportunity, and Smith brought it to the National Stationery Show in 1994, where a resoundingly positive reception affirmed the team’s new direction. In 1995, they formed the new firm, Envelopments, and soon leased a 1,000-square-foot production space. Rapid growth led them to eventually buy a 12,000-square-foot warehouse and production space.

Products were typically built on demand, and quickly turned around with the help of supportive external vendors providing services like die-cutting, foil stamping, embossing and debossing, as well as letterpress, thermographic and screen printing. But the on-demand world was moving at an ever-faster pace. Then there was the problem Envelopments dealers had finding printers who could handle the more challenging stocks.

“We needed to shorten our turn times and lower our costs to keep competitive,” Smith said, “to become a one-stop shop, offering paper, die cutting, print and assembly.”

THE SEARCH FOR ‘PRINTS CHARMING’

So Envelopments began a search for its first press.

“We wanted a press that could handle our wide range of card stocks, tie into our systems for automated production and, above all, deliver top quality,” Smith said. “We were looking for ‘Prints Charming.’”

Smith considered an HP® Indigo Press®, but worried that its wet ink wouldn’t perform as well on some textured stocks as less absorbent dry toner. He initially acquired a Xerox® iGen4® Press in 2012, but had issues with glues and adhesives not adhering to the page after printing. So Xerox replaced it with a Xerox® Color 800 Press, which overcame the issue because it uses no fuser fluid.

The shop upgraded to a Xerox® Color 1000i Press in 2015. It’s a faster device (100 pages per minute versus 80 ppm) with a fifth toner station for gold and silver metallic dry inks—the only digital press offering both metallic and personalization capabilities. The press also automates key steps in color management.

STRIKING GOLD

In the first eight months since installing the Color 1000i, metallic print accounted for 10% of overall print volume. In the next eight months it climbed to 13%, making it the company’s fastest growing business segment.

Envelopments produces between 100 and 200 orders daily with many automated steps that optimize productivity to save time and money. A key contributor: automatic processing of Web submissions in the company’s SAP Business One® system, which ties into Xerox® FreeFlow® Core to automate job submission to the Color 1000i.



This Envelopments wedding invitation package is built around a “PocketFold®,” center, which includes the invitation panel and a pocket for organizing inserts, such as the response card, accommodations request and return envelope.

Customers benefit from turnarounds that have been cut by days and weeks by the new lower-cost and faster-turn metallic ink option, and by one-stop shopping to avoid the search for printers who can handle challenging stocks.

Envelopments’ growth plans include targeting more professional graphic designers. The firm’s website offers a professional design environment that simulates design elements, such as color layered papers, textured papers stocks and Envelopments® Pocket Folds® for organizing inserts. It also offers an Adobe® Cloud Illustrator® extension for working on Envelopments products within Illustrator.

With differentiators like the design environment, metallic dry inks and its wide range of finely curated paper stocks—and with an automated production process controlling costs—Envelopments is more competitive than ever, Smith said. “We believe we’ve got great potential for new business.”

Put another way, the Xerox® Color 1000i Press—aka “Prints Charming”—is helping Envelopments strike gold.



# Envelopments® Strikes Gold with Xerox® Color 1000i Press

Envelopments Case History

To learn more, contact your Xerox representative or visit [www.xerox.com](http://www.xerox.com).



“To say that we have digital gold and silver metallic ink that is a lot less expensive than foil plates and that we can turn quickly is very appealing to our customers.”

– Mark Smith



**Mark Smith**  
Co-Founder  
and President,  
Envelopments



### About Envelopments

Envelopments designs and produces custom invitations and announcements for special occasions like weddings, births and openings, for consumers and businesses like hotels, universities and event organizers. Sales are through a network of over 2,000 dealers—mostly designers and small retail shops—in all 50 states and 30 countries, as well as via an online ecommerce site, and through relationships with companies like Shutterfly. Founded in 1995, Envelopments is a privately held company with 32 employees based in Santa Ana, California. Web site: [www.envelopments.com](http://www.envelopments.com)



## Summary

### THE CHALLENGE

As specialists in producing custom invitations and announcements, Envelopments was challenged by two significant trends: growing consumer preference for electronic communications and the dominance of online companies that erode business in the brick-and-mortar shops that use Envelopments' products and services. In addition, one of the company's greatest selling points—its large selection of fine paper stocks—was sometimes a liability when customers couldn't find print providers who could handle the challenging textures and weights of their stock selections.

### THE SOLUTION

After years of relying on trade printers—or having customers utilize desktop publishing and source printing themselves—Envelopments initiated its first in-house production printing in 2013. Two years later, they upgraded to a Xerox® Color 1000i Press, the only digital press that prints with gold and metallic dry inks. The press also automates key steps in color management, and Envelopments installed Xerox® FreeFlow® Core to automate additional steps in their Web-based job submission process.

### THE BENEFITS

- Printing services give Envelopments an additional revenue stream, and it is currently the company's fastest growing business segment.
- In-house printing services make Envelopments a one-stop shop for paper, printing and assembly, eliminating the need for designers and retail shops to source printers capable of working with sometimes-challenging paper stocks.
- The new press helps Envelopments differentiate its services with an economical, fast-turn option for metallic inks, which are popular in wedding and other invitations.
- Automating key steps in its production and color management processes saves Envelopments time and money, improving their competitiveness and bottom line.



As an experienced designer, Mark Smith knew he didn't want to be in the printing business—too much liability, too many headaches. But over the years, many of his customers begged him to reconsider. His firm, Envelopments, produced custom invitation and announcement packages that were often printed and assembled by his customers.

They told him they couldn't always find print providers who could handle the challenging textures and weights of the premier inventory of stocks Envelopments offered.

Smith, one of Envelopments co-founders and its president, eventually relented. “The business demanded we take that path,” he explained.

Today, he's glad he did. Printing is the fastest growing segment of the privately held firm's business, fueled by the unique capabilities of its Xerox® Color 1000i Press to print with metallic gold and silver dry inks at a much lower cost and with much faster turnarounds than analog options like foil stamping. About 13% of the firm's print volume uses metallic—mostly gold—the traditional treatment for wedding invitations.

“Xerox wanted us to be one of the first to have it, because they knew how much our market would love it,” Smith said. “And they were right.”

### IN FRONT OF THE WAVE

Envelopments draws upon a finely curated selection of more than 200 paper and card stocks to offer designs, parts and tools for assembling multi-part invitations and announcements in a range of colors, shapes and sizes for special occasions like weddings, openings and births.

Smith took a winding path to help co-found the firm, much of it at the front of various art and technology waves. In the late 1970s, he used Apple® computers in marketing communications before there was a Mac®, used the DARPA network to test business communications before it was known as the Internet and created “The Prevention Symbol” in the early 1990s as a tool to help teach that HIV/AIDS is preventable.

He began his association with what was to become Envelopments in 1985, when a friend introduced him to two sisters, Holly Jakobs and Deborah Hefter, who were opening a high-end specialty card and gift store in Irvine, California. Smith eventually created the logo, graphics and brand for their shop, Elements.